

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE:

Please amend the abstract as follows:

~~The invention relates to a~~ A scratchproof, temperature-stable protective layer, in particular a scratch-resistant protective layer for cooking hobs is provided. ~~In addition, and to processes and an apparatus for producing these protective layers are provided.~~ The protective layer includes at least one hard-material layer ~~which comprises~~ having a functional layer ~~formed from a metal oxide and/or metal nitride and/or metal carbide and/or metal oxynitride and/or metal carbonitride and/or metal oxycarbonitride, preferably from yttrium-zirconium oxide, the functional layer being interrupted by very thin interlayers, preferably formed from silicon oxide, silicon nitride or titanium-aluminum oxide,~~ so that the functional layer has a morphologically dense columnar structure that grows substantially perpendicular to the body surface. ~~Economie~~ The production of layers of this type is achieved ~~in particular~~ by means of a magnetron sputtering process and a corresponding arrangement, with the tendency of the columnar structures to widen out being reduced by targeted interruption of the growth of the functional layers.